(vi) G.S.R. No. 973(E), dated the 30th September, 1988, publishing the approval of the Kandla Port Employees' (Retirement Benefit Fund) Regulations, 1988.

(vii) G.S.R. No. 1007(E), dated the 13th October, 1988, publishing the approval of the New Mangalore Port Employees (Leave) Amendment Regulations, 1988.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT- /88 for (i) to (vii)]

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Bofors Gun Deal—*(Contd..)*

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to apologise to the House for my inability to be present yesterday during the debate. I have done my best to keep myself informed about what hon. Members have said. I would like to think in particular my colleague, Shri Shiv Shankar, for his intervention. I would not like to draw any distinction between the various members who have spoken, many members on the Opposition and on this side of the House, but I was given to understand by my colleagues that Shri Sukul and Shri Matto on both sides of the house made very fine contributions.

I have always tried to share with the House whatever information I have on this Bofors issue or for that matter any other issue. And the Bofors debate slowly is becoming so frequent that it may find its way in the Guinnes Book of Records. Therefore, when I again try to deal with the many points that have been raised here, I have to necessarily repeat..

SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN (Kerala): I am on a point of order. I have given notice for a special mention and have got the notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wait, it will come after this.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Punjab): Sir, I would suggest that you circulate a copy of the Instructions to members again so that they do not have to raise a point of order like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One of the instructions is to let the Minister continue.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): The book is there, they should read it.

SHRI K. C. PANT: The point that I was making was that I have to necessarily repeat the things that I have said before, but an important point that emerged from yesterday's debate was that although since last year we have been debating this matter for over a year now and several times, new or fresh pieces of evidence are not forthcoming except those that came forward as a result of Government's strenuous efforts. This is something which hon. members opposite do not easily acknowledge. Whenever information comes from any source, whether it is a newspaper, or whether it is a Swedish agency or anybody else, we acknowledge it. I wish my friends opposite, who are objective enough and fair enough, to accept that the Government has made efforts which have yielded information on the basis of which this debate has been going on

What has made yesterday's debate somewhat different and has aroused lot of anticipation, both in the House and in the country, was the fact that an important Opposition leader made certain charges and promised to furnish evidence. Now, the timing of this particular charge was just while the session was meeting . In every session something comes up and there is a debate. There seems to be a carefully planned effort to inject vitality into a flagging debate before every session and there appears to

[Shri K. C. Pant]

be a game plan which is moving according to a time-frame and all of us have to apply our minds as to why this is happening, who is behind it, whether we are not unconsciously being drawn into a debate at the instance of other forces. This is a sober thought which should be considered by all of us.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY (Karnataka): What are the other forces?

SHRI K C. PANT: Each one of us has to look within. Sometimes it is good to look within also and not always look without and my friend, Shri Gurupadaswamy has sufficient spiritual resources to be able to look within. I would not say that for everybody.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY (Uttar Pradesh): Kindly look into your own self.

SHRI K. C. PANT: All Swamys are not like Gurupadaswamy. Sir, as I said, the serious allegation was made against the Prime Minister by a senior Opposition Member. He was an erstwhile colleague for many years.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA (Uttar Pradesh): But he was also....

SHRI K. C. PANT: Long before that. He was with me for many years and he was also a member of the Government and I think that all of you will agree that if and when the Opposition party which is being brought together, actually is brought together, he will be the leader of that party. So we have to take his charges seriously. They are not frivolous charges. They are not made in a moment of absent-mindedness and if I remember aright, then he has promised or he had promised when he made the charge that he would bring forward some sensational disclosure of evidence which he would retrieve from his electronic memory recorder. I think that is what the newspapers said. On the 4th November, he disclosed or the newspaper report attributed to him the statement in which he disclosed precise account number of the Swiss bank in which the Prime Minister had retained amounts paid by M/s. Bofors—I repeat, the precise account number of the Swiss bank in which the Prime Minister had retained the amount paid by M/s. Bofors. Now, this is a sensational piece of news. So naturally it is picked by all the media and it is widely reported and you can imagine we are talking about the Prime Minister of the country. This news travels all over the country and beyond and people read it in every village, people read it in every tea shop. It has a certain impact in the whole country and outside. It is made by an Opposition leader of stature in the country. Please remember these facts.

Now, the Opposition leader is fair. He says if he fails to show conclusive evidence-mark the word "conclusive evidence"—in support of his charge that the Prime Minister maintained an account No. 99921 in a Swiss bank. then he would retire from political life and he would take Sanyas. This is what he has said. That is what the press has reported. This is what all of you have read and I would say that his saying this has lent a certain earnestness and credibility to the charge that after all. when somebody offers to retire from public life and that too a man who believes in value politics, politics of values ...*(Interruptions)*... No, let us take him at face value. Let us take it seriously and then let us examine this. And this so called evidence is then published. It is published through the media and friends opposite in this House and in the other House come forward with the invoice number, they come forward with Kroners, they come forward with rupees, all kinds of figures are trotted around and there are demands for another round of debate and the debate has started and it is about to end. Now, the important

thing is that having created all this sensation, having created this anticipation, having made serious charges, what are the charges and what is the evidence that has emerged from the famous electronic memory recorder? This is what we have to see and we have to see it in all earnestness and in all seriousness, for the reasons which I have just mentioned.

Sir, so far, one of the handicaps of the Government was that it was seeking to dispel unfounded accusations because they were vague, they were general, they were sometimes amorphous and it was difficult to pin down the accusations. We were told, "you are guilty, you prove yourself innocent." That was the gravemen of innocent." That was the gravemen of you being guilty, can you prove yourself innocent? But repeatedly.... *(Interruption)*...

SOME HON'BLE MEMBERS: Yes, why not?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Suppose, I will tell you, in the other House—usually, I would not refer to the other House, but you asked a question, why not—Mr. Datta Samant got up and said, in the course of Bofors debate, to Prof. Madhu Dandvate, "Prof. Madhu Dandvate, suppose, I charge you with having an account in the Swiss Bank You will not be able to clear yourself because the Swiss won't give the information." This is what Datta Samant said. It is on record. You can see it. He was making a point. I am not saying he was charging Prof. Madhu Dandvate and this is a point which you also think about. But luckily, we are not in that position now. After one year of strenuous efforts by friends opposite, by newspapers, by other elements, which are unfriendly to this Government, now, at last a concrete specific charge been made. An account Number has been given. Name of the Swiss Bank has been given and so, we are in a position to look into something specific. So, Sir, let us see what this charge amounts to, a charge which has been publicly made and which has been reported in newspapers. The newspapers published it on the 5th of November 1988. These newspapers reported, Shri V. P. Singh, while speaking in Patna, on the 4th of November said, according to the "Indian Express," and I quote:

> "The Janata Dal President, Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh on Friday came out with the account number in the Swiss bank in which commission from Bofors deal had been deposited thrice, totalling 3.2 crore Swedish kroner.

Again I quote:

> "Mentioning that the account No. 99921 P.U. of the Swiss Bank Corporation, Geneva, stood in the name of Lotus, he said Lotus and Rajiv Gandhi were same. Mr. Singh said that meaning of the word "Lotus" in Hindi was "Rajiv".

On the next day, that is on 5th November 1988, Shri V. P. Singh was in Lucknow and his statement there was again carried by the press. I quote from the 'Indian Express' of 6th November. You will mark that I am quoting from the 'Indian Express'. I quote:

> "The former finance and defence minister on Friday disclosed in Patna the account number of the Prime Minister, held in the name of "Lotus" in a Swiss bank and also the various amounts credited to it.
>
> Mr. V. P. Singh claimed here on Saturday that though he had the information, he did not consider the time appropriate for its disclosure so far. "But now is the time to tell the nation wih positive evidence...."

positive evidence,

> "...of the commission having been taken by the Prime Minister in defence deals."

Positive evidence of the commission having been taken by the Prime

[Shri K. C. Pant]

Minister in defence deals. You will all agree that this is a very specific, a very precise, charge and it is important to be clear about the precise gravamen of the charge. I would like, therefore, to enumerate it. The first charge that Shri V. P. Singh seeks to establish is that 3.2 crore Swedish kroner was paid by M/s. Bofors into the Swiss Bank Corporation by way of commission; secondly, that this amount was deposited in account number 99921 P.U. in the code name of Lotus; and thirdly, that the Lotus account is that of the Prime Minister. There is no scope for any confusion whatever in the allegations that have been enumerated above because I have quoted from the newspapers which have produced these reports. And to buttress my own understanding, I would like also to quote from the editorial of the 'Tribune' of 7th November. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): Mr. Minister, are you replying to the points which we raised in our debate yesterday or are you replying to Mr. V. P. Singh's statements? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: I am trying to warn you about the possible risks and dangers into which you will run when you form any kind of understanding with the Janata Dal. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Mr. Minister, will you yield for a second? You started with the fact that you were not present here but as far as you could peruse our speeches...

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have not finished.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Please, just listen. In replying, you have now taken at least 15 minutes. But you have yet to come to the points which we raised specifically in our speeches. Till now you have only been replying to Mr. V. P. Singh's statements. Tell us in whose name that bank account stands. Tell us who have received that money which you have admitted

SHRI K. C. PANT: I am afraid this tiem you are not going to get away so easily. This time I am not going to let you get away.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: All right (*Interruptions*). You go through the speeches made by us and you reply to us. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: You have to answer. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him proceed

SHRI K. C. PANT: Now, Mr. Dipen Ghosh is a clever man. He should not get into the dock. There are others in the dock and now they have to answer. You should not get into the dock inadvertently. (*Interruptions*) This is what the Tribune Editorial said and I quote:

> "The Janata Dal President told a rally of striking Government employees in Patna on Friday that as much as 3.21 crores Swedish Kroners were deposited by Bofors into the Swiss Banking Corporation between December 1986 and March 1987. This amount was by way of commission for the Howitzer deal between Bofors and the Governname of Lotus which, according to was startlingly specific in his disclosures. The money was deposited in Account No. 99921PU in the code name of Lotus which, according to the former Defence Minister, was held by the Prime Minister himself."

So, there can be no question about the proper understanding of what appeared in the press.

श्री वीरेन्द्र वर्मा (उत्तर प्रदेश) : रुपये तो जमा हुए हैं।

श्री पवन कुमार बांसल : वर्मा जी, जो आपके दिमाग में घुस गया है .. (**व्यवधान**) . .

श्री विश्वजित पृथ्वीजित सिंह (महाराष्ट्र) : सभापति महोदय, ये लातों के भूत बातों से नहीं मानेंगे । भारतवर्ष के मतदाता इनको देखेंगे । हम लोग तो इनको बातों से समझा रहे हैं, वह इनको लातों से समझाएंगे ।

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: We want to know in whose name that account stands.

(*Interruptions*)

Shri K. C. PANT: Sir, I have enumerated the charges. Now comes the evidence. The whole nation was waiting with bated breath for the evidence because he said: "I promise that I will furnish the evidence." I have already given you the quotation. It was unthinkable that a man in that position in public life and a man of high principles would have levelled such serious charges without firm evidence in his possession. Nobody would have imagined that. Nobody can even now imagine it. I am sure none of you can imagine it. Having been the Finance Minister, he is not unversed in financial matters, nor in sifting evidence. And he has chosen to make this charge. Do you want to take it lightly or do you want to drown it out? You don't want to take him seriously. I take him more seriously than what you do. (*Interruptions*) So, what is the startling new evidence which he has produced? On the 9th of November, the newspapers come out with three documents. They receive widespread publicity. These are marked A, B and C in support of the charges made. And what does A say? Document A is apparently an advice dated 21 January, 1987, from Bofors to Svenska Incorporated, Svenska. I hope you note that. It may be observed that the contract number referred to in the document A is not connected with the purchase of 155 mm Howitzer guns from Bofors but to another contract. Has that sunk in? However, the more important point.....

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Which other contract?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Please try to understand.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Tell us. Which other contract?

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: The Minister said: "Has it sunk in?" We said: "No, it has not sunk in." Tell us which other contract.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM (Tamil Nadu): Svenska is a spurious company. It is a spurious company. It is a spurious company ....(*Interruptions*)... It has not done any service in the deal according to the CBI report. So, how can there be another contract? ...*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: He will come to all that. Please sit down ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: No, no. According to the CBI report, it has not done any service. So, how can there be another contract ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA (Andhra Pradesh): We would like to know what the other contract is ..(Interruptions)..

MR. CHAIRMAN: You get used to hearing also! ...(*Interruptions*)... Please sit down.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the trouble is that the more intelligent the people are and the more understanding, the greater is our time saved... (*Interruptions*)... Therefore, if you want to shut me out, you try. You try to shut me out and fail ...(*Interruptions*)...

You will not be able to provoke me and you will not be able to shut me out. So, please listen to me ... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Sir, may I interrupt? Mr. Pant, will you yield for a minute? I will not take long.

[Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy]

Sir, I raised the debate yesterday and the debate was on the disclosures made in the Press and elsewhere. Sir, my friend, Shri K. C. Pant, is a very intelligent man. But I think he should reply to that part of the debate raised yesterday. But he is not replying to those questions. We never referred to these things at all here ...(*Interruptions*)...

ठाकुर जगतपाल सिंह (मध्य प्रदेश) : आप रिप्लाई सुनना ही नहीं चाहते, अपनी ही बात कहते जाते है ...

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Sir, we would like to know what the other contract is ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, Mr. Gurupadaswamy is an old friend of mine. He says that the allegations appearing in the Press were the subject-matter of yesterday's debate or Motion or Short-Duration Discussion or whatever it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Short-Duration Discussion.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Whatever it is, we discussed whatever appeared in the Press and whatever appeared in the Press are these Press reports and that is what I am discussing now. What is the objection? That is precisely what I am doing. You should thank me for that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You please deal with the admission of the Prime Minister himself ...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Let us know what the other contract is... (*Interruptions*) ....

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: What is the other contract? ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down . (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI (Maharashtra): Please listen. What he says is the whole crux ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K. C. PANT: Now, Sir, I am going by the documents which have been produced as A, B and C in the newspapers. I am saying things which cannot be controverted because they are in black and white...(*Interruptions*)... and they are in the newspapers ...(*Interruptions*)... I am giving you the details ...(*Interruptions*)... *I would like you* ... (*Interruptions*)... I would like you . (*Interruptions*)... I would like you also to consider what I am saying. You may not agree with me. I am not even saying, "You agree with me.". But if you listen you will come to my point of view because what I am saying is from the document . (*Interruptions*) ...and what I am saying is from what has appeared ... (*Interruptions*) ... What I am talking about is from what has appeared ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The proceedings would have been over if you people had not interrupted like this. ...(*Interruptions*).... Let him speak, please. He has to reply and he has to speak.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: But he has to reply to our points...(*Interruptions*)....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not only that. He has to make his own points also .. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the second point is ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री कैलाशपति मिश्र (बिहार) : एक मिनट, एक मिनट सर.....

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the second point is ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री कैलाशपति मिश्र : एक मिनट, एक मिनट का एक सुझाव है अध्यक्ष महोदय ....

MR. CHAIRMAN: You should know that so long as he is not yielding, he is not yielding and the matter ends there ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the second point is ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is not yielding. Please sit down. This is a well-established convention.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir the second point is that Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh made a serious accusation about the quantum of money. Now, even if the document is to be taken at its face-value, the amount of the commission ... (*Interruptions*) ... the amount of the commission ..(*Interruptions*)... even if you take the document's face-value. the amount of the commission is 2.83,751 Kroners and not 4.7 million something Kroners. So, that 4.7 million Kroners represents the value of sales and not of the commission. Now, this is what emerges from the document itself.

Then, Sir, the account No. 99921 TU is the account number of Svenska Inc. in the Swiss Bank Corporation. Neither this document nor Account No. 99921 TU appeared to have anything whatever to do with Lotus. Earlier, I told you specifically what charges were made and now I am telling what the document has revealed. And. therefore, the contradictions are obvious as I am reading them out, if you have an open mind. Document 'B' is unlike document 'C'. Now, this purports to be an advice issued by M/s. Bofors on 18th December, 1986 to the Swiss Bank Corporation for the attention of one Mr. Labond with reference to Lotus. And the important feature of this document is that it nowhere mentions Account No. 99921 relied upon by Shri Singh. Therefore, I would like you very carefully to consider the discrepancies that are obvious. These are obvious discrepancies and I have just read them out. So what comes out is that if you look at the evidence then the first charge was that of commission of 3.21 crores kroners. That was—Charge No. 1. I read it earlier. And if we total up the entire commission figure appearing in documents 'A', 'B' and 'C' we come to a figure of kroners 16,40,904.86, about 16.4 lakh kroners, that is about forty lakhs of rupees—not 3.2 crores kroners as alleged. Please notice it. It is a multiple of, how much? Well, several times, twenty times at least. If you multiply it twenty times, then you get that figure. So that is one. Document 'B' does not any where refer to the Swiss Bank Corporation. This is another thing which you have to note. The Swiss Bank Corporation was referred to specifically by Mr. V. P. Singh. Document 'B' does not refer to that. So the former Finance Minister has referred to a figure of 164 lakhs as 3.2 crores. Is that possible? Is that feasible? Is that just an omission or is that deliberate? Can that be mistaken? Could he have his arithmetic wrong? Did his personal computer go wrong? What happened?

This charge, don't forget, was made seriously; it was made publicly. This is a public charge. And in this public charge we find that the figures are wrong to the extent of one to twenty. This is point number one. Do you think the motives were noble? Do you think that this is something which one can ignore and dismiss lightly? This is point number one.

What is the next allegation? The next allegation is that another alleged amount of 3.2 kroners was paid into Account No. 99921. Now, again, documents 'A', 'B' and 'C' are given as evidence to substantiate this contention. Account No. 99921 is referred to in only one of these documents, namely document 'A', and the commission amount therein indicated as payable—and it is not clear whether it has been paid; it has been given as payable—is 283,751 kroners, the figure which would need to be multiplied by more than 110 times to yield the figure of 3.2 crores kroners.

Now, Sir, if the former Finance Minister can arrive at figures which are so wrong, then you can draw your own conclusions. I would not like to say anything harsh, but it is not something one can ignore. The third part of the allegation is that all these sums were paid into the account of

[Shri K. C. Pant]

the Prime Minister who is synonymous with Lotus. This is such a puerile argument that because lotus means Rajiv, all Rajivs in this world are involved in this matter. I will ignore that. But the socalled evidence furnished does not even establish that the assumed amount of 3.2 crore kroners was paid into the Lotus account nor that the account No. 99921 is that of Lotus. It does not establish that. It will be seen that documents A and B do not relate to Lotus at all but relate to Svenska. The other document C relates to Lotus and that reflects a commission of 10.92 lakh kroners only, not 3.2 crore kroners. Moreover, this document nowhere refers to No. 99921 as being the Lotus account. It is important to be absolutely clear on this because, as I said earlier, this was a charge made by one of the leading lights opposite and there are many people who are fair-minded in the Opposition even today who will readily concede that this kind of loose and irresponsible charge cannot be allowed to go without bringing all this on record. I would be failing in my duty if I did not bring all this on record and I would be charged later on by you for not having brought these facts to your notice. Therefore, even an unpleasant duty has to be done and I have to bring all these facts to your notice. So let us examine: Do these three documents establish these charges? I would like you to carefully note this again. I have summed them up in these three small sentences. Firstly, all the three documents taken togeher do not add up to payment of commission of 3.2 crore kroners but to barely 16 lakh kroners. Secondly, account No. 99921 with a PU as initially alleged, or a TU as subsequently stated, has nothing to do with Lotus; it relates to Svenska. Thirdly, Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh has not produced a shred of evidence, an iota of evidence, to even suggest, much less to establish, that the Lotus account is that of the Prime Minister, much less that 3.2 crore kroners was paid into it. These are the facts. These are the charges. These are the accusations, specific, clear, concise; precise, and this is the evidence that has been furnished and the net conclusion is that the charges have not been substantiated. And the fact of the matter is that Shri V. P. Singh does not produce any evidence does not possess any evidence, because there is no evidence, because the facts are wrong. So what happened yesterday in the House? Many of my friends said, "Please repeat your charges here." He did not repeat the charges. He made a long speech. And, therefore, ..(interruptions).. it is astonishing that Shri V. P. Singh should have chosen to make these slanderous allegations against the Prime Minister from a public platform without a single shred of evidence..

स्वास्थ्य और परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (कुमारी सरोज खापर्डे): चुल्लू भर पानी में डूब कर मरना चाहिए ।

He is not fit for politics.

SHRI K. C. PANT: And then when he comes to the House and he is faced with this question and we request him to substantiate this or to at least authenticate this, he walks out of the House. He has not authenticated it. These press reports remain unauhenticated. Now I ask you: Is this the way that we are going to conduct public affairs in this country? Is this how our democracy is going to grow that we make charges against the Prime Minister outside, and inside the House we refuse to repeat the charges because there is no basis to it and yet we make the charge outside and say we have the evidence? Is this the way we run our politics? Is this the way we create a working relationship amongst ourselves? Must we not have a working relationship between the Opposition and the Government? We are not enemies. We are not hostile to each other. We have a common goal in building up this

country. But then, is this the way to go about it? Where will this take us this kind of mud-slinging, this kind of slander without any evidence, without a shred of evidence, without any substantiation? And this travels to every nook and corner of the country. And then do you think this has no impact on the people? And I would like to remind you that when you make such unsubstantiated charges—now people will have read all over the country that Mr. V. P. Singh has not repeated the charge on the floor of the House—what is the impact in the country? I would be sorry to see Mr. V. P. Singh's stature go down. I do not want any of your statures go down because if your stature goes up, that sustains my stature.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: This is shedding crocodile tears.

SHRI K. C. PANT: There is a larger motive which you will never understand. I believe in the democratic system. And the democratic system is sustained by every single party in this country whether in the Opposition or the ruling party. I do not claim an exclusive right to maintain and sustain and support the democratic system. But can this democratic system be sustained if responsible or so-called responsible leaders of the Opposition make slanderous charges against the Prime Minister? Is this the way? And, therefore, I said that your position in public life is as important as that of people on this side. Are you maintaining it? And if you are not maintainig it, is it ultimately going to help our democratic structure? I would like you to seriously consider this. Now having made the charge outside, if Shri V. P. Singh does not choose to authenticate this charge inside the House, what are the conclusions which we can come to? What is the conclusion you would come to? It is that these charges are falso and baseless. Is there any other conclusion possible?

SHRI BAHARUL ISLAM (Assam): Maliciously false.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Is it possible to have any other conclusion?

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: There is the other way round to look at it. (*Interruptions*) Do I need your permission to speak?

SHRI TIRATH RAM AMLA (Jammu & Kashmir): You must not speak unless the Chair allows you. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Is this the way how democracy is to flourish in this House? Is this the way the democracy is going to be conducted? (*Interruptions*) He must be a new Member. And the Congress Members are all illiterates. They do not know the Parliamentary procedure.

SHRI MIRZA IRSHADBAIG (Gujarat): Mr. Swamy, you do not know what the procedure is when the Minister is replying. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Now, Sir, I would like to have a look at these three documents because my friends would probably have expected, like me, that this would be a new evidence, this would be something new which has come up. And, therefore, having come up anew, it is only right that it should have been played up, it should have been sensationalised, it should have been dramatised —how far correctly or wrongly, you have just seen. But even then, let us see whether these were new or old documents. The anti-climax of the matter is that all these documents had been published in the 'Hindu' five months ago. These were not new documents. It is not as though he had got any fresh evidence, which he may have misinterpreted. I could understand a genuine misinterpretation of documents. I

[Shri K. C. Pant]

could have understood somebody misreading the documents and coming to wrong conclusions. Nothing of the sort. Five months have passed, one year has passed to collect evidence. Five months have passed since these documents were published and today they are trotted out as so-called evidence to substantiate a charge against the Prime Minister which is not repeated on the floor of the House. So, I leave it to you to draw your own conclusions. And I do not, as I said, want to repeat all that Shri V. P. Singh said, but I will repeat only this from what he said in Lucknow on the 5th. I quote: Mr. V. P. Singh claimed here on Saturday that though he had the information he did not consider the time appropriate for its dsclosure so far. And, as I said earlier, he talked of positive evidence, positive evidence, of the commission having been taken by the Prime Minister in Defence deals. It is against this background that I read all this out. It is against this background that it was my duty to show you how wrong these statements were and it is my duty to show you that this kind of dramatisation does not change the facts, that this kind of gimmickry does not change the facts, and that the hard facts will have to be faced both by you and by us. This is not the way in which we can carry politics forward in this country. If Mr. V. P. Singh wants to take to sanyas, I think I have made out sufficient ground for him to do so. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Even if Mr. V. P. Singh takes to sanyas, it will still remain a mystery as to who had received that commission which you have admitted.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the one thing Shri Dipen Ghosh will never understand is 'sanyas'.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Because, he will get away with the money and I will take to sanyas, that will never happen. I will not allow him to take away that money by going to sanyas.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, will he answer a question? (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are already a sanyasi.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: I would like to know whether the Minister of Defence has found out who those three ladies are, who own the Svenska company. Have you found that out?

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: On the floor of the House the former Finance Minister Mr. Tiwari, has said that they are going to enter into an agreement with Switzerland. Have you done it?

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Who are the three ladies of Svenska?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, whatever the mistakes Shri V. P. Singh might have made in this case, I would like to say that his level of spiritual growth is probably better than that of Shri Dipen Ghosh. That is why he could talk in terms of sanyas.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: My point is that he wants to get away with the money and expects me to take to sanyas. That will never happen. I will catch hold of you. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please let him complete.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, we are not going to allow him to beat about the bush. The Prime Minister himself has admitted that commission was paid. Our question is who has received that commission? And the second question is that the Prime Minister had admitted to SUNDAY in an interview.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him complete and then you ask.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Who are the three ladies who own Svenska? Have you found that out? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH: One minute, Sir, I have a point of order. सभापति महोदय, मुझे इजाजत दें। मेरा यह कहनाहैकिको यास लेना है, वे सब लोग उस सन्यासी के पास जायें जो सब सन्यासियों से ऊंचा है, एन० टी० रामाराव, और वे उसकी एडवाइस लेकर सन्यास लें।

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I think we should come back to a more serious discussion, because *sanyas* etc., are beyond my friends.

Sir, one demand that was made by some hon. friends was peremptory cancellation of the contract. That was one of the suggestions made. I had dealt with this at great length last time and I do not want to repeat it; there is no point in repeating it. I had explained that we cannot cancel the contract out of a sense of pique, and that it is necessary for us, so long as we are in the Government, to take into account the legal implications, to take into account the financial and economic implications, to take into account the security implications, to take into account the fact that this was not a sudden abrupt decision. It had taken a number of years—5-6 years—while this whole process of selection of the gun went on, into which the JPC had gone. Today, some of the friends malign JPC. If they go into the record, they will find that JPC has been very thorough and pains-taking in its efforts and it had gone into the entire process and so it has seen how long it has taken to make the decision about the gun. Having taken the decision, you have to introduce it into the army. people have to be trained; people have to get accustomed to using it. There is a certain time-frame within which the whole thing has to be done, and the defence preparedness for the future then becomes partly contingent on introduction of this new weapon system. So, it is not as though one fine day I switch it on and next fine day I switch it off. I think we cannot ignore these factors and it is for that reason that we have firmly concluded that cancellation of the contract would be prejudicial to our national interest. And I said so last time and I thought that by the time I had finished last time, most of my friends opposite had understood this and agreed with this. I think that anybody who makes this suggestion has inadequate appreciation of the likely impact of cancellation of this contract on our defence preparedness, because I do not think anybody opposite would deliberately make any suggestion which would have adverse impact on our defence preparedness.

Then, a charge was made here that the Government is trying to mislead the House, Government has shifted its position again and again. This is a charge which was made ..(*Interruptions*). Am I not right that this is the charge which was made?

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Yes.

SHRI K C PANT: Why interrupt me even when you agree?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him proceed with the charge.

SHRI K. C. PANT: And that too, without a smile, Sir! Sometime they can smile; it doesn't hurt to smile; it doesn't cost anything to smile. They may learn from Mr. Subramaniam Swamy; at least he smiles.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Who are those Panamanian ladies who own Svenska? Have you found out?

SHRI K. C. PANT: He has taken many political knocks in life but he has not lost his interest in ladies.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: I consider it as a defamatory statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you lost all interest in ladies?

SHRI MIRZA IRSHADBAIG: It is complimentary, Mr. Swamy.

SHRI K. C. PANT: The irony of the situation is that having been in Government so long, I cannot recall a single instance where the Government has been so open, so forthright to come forward immediately with whatever facts it has in its possession and has taken the House into confidence right throughout, without any reservations. I can say about the JPC; I said it earlier also that we gave them everything they wanted, all information they wanted, papers they wanted, anything they wanted and in this particular case, to be charged with trying to conceal something or to mislead the House, seems to me to be highly unfair. Sir, what happened? Let me refresh the memory of my friends.

It was the Government of India which had taken the initiative to negotiate directly with foreign suppliers. There is no dispute on that. If the Government had not said that there should be no middlemen, the whole problem would not have arisen. If the Government had negotiated through middlemen, as was always done, my friends would have been quite happy. Somebody would have been paid commission and nothing would have come out. Everybody would have said that this is what happens anywhere in the world. Everybody would have said 'what is so bad about it? Why should we object?'. Here, the Government took a decision that there should be no middlemen and there should be no commission. Therefore, this is not something objectionable. Then, the Government did not leave it at that. It is not that Government had said this and left it at that. Government did not leave it at that. Government conveyed its desire to the Swedish Government, to the company. Then, as you know, the matter was taken up at the level of the Prime Ministers. This matter was raised between the Prime Minsters of India and Sweden. A man of Olof Palme's stature agreed. He said, 'Yes; there will be no middlemen'. He conveyed it to Bofors. Bofors said 'There will be no middlemen'. I want to repeat this even at the cost of repeating something which I have said so many times earlier because one tends to lose sight of the basic fact. It is this desire of the Government not to have middlemen which lies at the root of the whole controversy. It is a good desire. It is a good impulse. I would think that the House would support this impulse. I would think that the House would say Yes; it is good you attempted it; even though Bofors might have failed you, it was something good.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA (Bihar): Did they fail you?

SHRI K. C. PANT: I said 'even'. I hold no brief for them. If they have failed, we will together act against them. What is there? That is my problem. If it is found that they have failed us, we will act together against them. Why do you treat us separate from yourselves?

My point is that we tried to do something which you should support. We tried to remove middlemen. We went right up to the Prime Miinster's level. There, it was reconfirmed. There can be no objection to this. There should be no objection to this. There should be no attempt to say that the Government was misleading you or that the Government did not act in an honourable way or that the Government came to the House after the Swedish Radio broadcast and said, 'We did not want middlemen'. If we did not want

middlemen, it was right for us to say so. That is what we had been told by them and this is what we told them. This is all the Government did. Government told you this.

Then, Sir, as hon. Members would recall, Government approached the Swedish Government. The Indian Government approached the Swedish Government and said 'Please make enquiries'. We told them 'The Swedish Radio had said certain things; our Parliament wants to know the correct position and, therefore, why don't you please tell us?'. They then apointed an enquiry by the Swedish National Audit Bureau. The Swedish National Audit Bureau went into this and they gave a report. The report said that *certain payments have been made and* they said that these were winding up charges. They sent us this report. If you remember, the day they sent us the report we called the Leaders of the Opposition. We gave the report to the Press, as far as I remember, that very day. We decided to appoint a Joint Parliamentary Committee, a demand which was made by the Opposition in the earlier Session. Now, are these the action of a Government which has anything to hide? Are these actions of a Government which is trying to mislead the House or which is trying to mislead the Opposition Members? These are the actions of a Government which is trying to carry all of you with us. I hope you will admit that. I hope you will agree with that.

श्री रामनरेश यादव (उत्तर प्रदेश): मान्यवर, सवाल यह है कि एक तरफ तो यह चीज कही जा रही है, तो सरकार को क्या कठिनाई है फिर एक पार्लियामेंटरी कमेटी बना दीजिए..... (व्यवधान) सारा मामला साफ हो जायेगा।

1.00 p.m.

SHRI K.C. PANT: Now, Sir, the Joint Parliamentary Committee having been appointed, it went into this whole matter. I do not want to go into the Joint Parliamentary Committee's findings, but they came to certain conclusions. One of them was that the payments are apparently in the nature of winding up charges. Second, that there was no indication of any Indian having benefited. And then they went into the selection process and the negotiation process and they came to the conclusion that these were in order. (*Interruptions*). You know all these things, but it is necessary...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You say *whether it was winding-up charges or* commission. Now the Prime Minister admits that it was a commission.

SHRI K. C. PANT: No, he has not said that.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The Prime Minister has said in the *Sunday* that it was a commission. He has not uttered a word of winding-up charges. He has said, "...for genuine work."

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have got the Sunday here.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: He has tried to justify the payment of commission. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K. C. PANT: Shouting is not going to make a difference.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: It is not 'shouting', it is the question of reading and understanding the meaning of English.

SHRI K. C. PANT: What I am trying to say is, as far as I have read, the Sunday does not say that the Prime Minister has said that commissions have been paid. "That payment have been made," he has said.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Commission has been paid for genuine work. May be for genuine work, but what does this mean? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: Let me read it out. This is in black and white. Let me read it out for you. I will read it out. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You read the question first and then the answer.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Yes, I will read the question and then the answer. The question is, "...for 64 crore for industrial espionage"and the answer is, "There are three or four payments."

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह: (बिहार) : इससे पहले वाला पढ़िये ।

SHRI K. C. PANT: This is very odd. My friend asks me to read something. When I am reading it, my other friend asked me not to read it.

श्री राम अवां श सिंह :: हम कह रहे हैं कि पढ़िये, लेकिन इसके थोड़ा पहलेपढ़िये ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him read it

SHRI K. C. PANT: I am prepared to read the whole interview. It will take a long time. I have got it here. Here Shri Dipen Ghosh has raised a point and I am giving the exact words. I quote: "The whole thing may not be." Then he says, "Hypothetically". Please remember this and please note it. "Hypothetically I am saying, the whole amount could have been paid for genuine work."

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V ARUNACHALAM: Yes, he is trying to justify the commission that has been paid. That is the defence. If the payment of commission is proved, then the Prime Minister is prepared to justify. That is the argument, that is the defence prepared by the Prime Minister. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C PANT: I have read this out at the instance of Shri Dipen Ghosh.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: I am on a point of order. Mr. Minister says that the word 'commission' was not used by the Prime Minister, only the word 'payments' was used. Let him quote the entire paragraph. He says that the commission was not paid to any Indian agent. Firstly, he said payment and then he said that commission was not paid to any Indian agent. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have great respect for Shri Aladi Aruna because his opinion changes with the times.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: No, no, my opinion does not change.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I did not say 'you'. You are inflexible, rigid.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: I am a man of principle. I am not unprincipled. Like you my opinion does not change. You change your seat from this side to that side.

SHRI K. C. PANT: All right, if it makes you happy you are inflexible and rigid, but Shri Aladi Aruna says something new every time he speaks on the subject. Therefore, it is always worth-while listening to him.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: On a point of order. Regarding the interview of the hon. Prime Minister there is a difference of interpretation. (*Interruptions*) It is for the Chair to see.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Under what rule?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him proceed. please.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Therefore I was saying that these are the reasons why we made certain statements in the House The limited point was that Government had not tried to mislead the House. I owe it to the House to explain why we said certain things on the basis of the reports we received. You should have patience to listen. I am trying to explain this because if the impression is created in the country that Government or myself or the Prime Minister had deliberately misled the House, I consider it a crime. After all I owe it to the House,I owe it to the country and we must report to you honestly. But we cannot report to you wrong things. We can only report to you what has been reported to us, what is in our knowledge. And to that extent I have always reported to you and reported to you without any reservation. What can be the objection? If new facts come, we will report that to you. If facts change, we will report that to you. We do

not say, "no, no, facts have not changed". At different points of time...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You came to the House when you could not avoid it. You did not say it. The Swedish National Audit Bureau had stated that.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Where is the question? Who appointed the JPC? Who went to Sweden? Sir, this is very very difficult to answer. Because I was trying my best to explain to you how at different times different things happened, that how we came before the country and the House to report exactly on what was done.

Now, Sir, there is only one other point which was raised. They say, the Hindu documents...

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : क्या "संडे" खत्म हो गया ?

श्री के० सी० पंत : संडे ही संडे थोड़ा चलता है । संडे खत्म हो गया । अब तो मंडे हो गया । अगर आपका बस चले तो हिन्दुस्तान में काम ही न हो और रोज मंडे ही मंडे हो ।

Sir, 'the Hindu' came out with certain certain documents in which they said that commissions have been paid. Now the House had discussed it last time and we said that certain enquiries will be made and we have instituted certain enquiries.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: When will these be completed?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Again, Sir, it is not—I repeat it is not—as though we have avoided facing up to the question of the material which was published by 'the Hindu'. The House debated it, we discused it, the other House debated and discussed it. We came to certain conclusions and we told the House what we were doing. So, where is the question of misleading the House? That at least you will concede.

Now there is a demand for another JPC. Again that demand was dealt with by me in the last Session. We did examine that. But, Sir, what does JPC do? JPC is not an investigating agency. One JPC has gone into this whole matter. We cannot trifle with parliamnetary institutions like this. You chose to stay away from it after asking for a JPC. And now you want a second JPC. Does it lie in your month to ask for a second JPC? You should consider that you have really run away from your responsibility by not joining the JPC.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You did not agree to our proposals That is why we did not join it.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: You know why we did not join the JPC.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I tried my level best.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You tried But you did not accept our proposals.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I did not accept everything.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: I was in that meeting. You tried. But you did not accept our proposals. It is not a question of running away from it.

SHRI K. C. PANT: It is a question of running away. I again repeat, Sir, had my friends joined the JPC and had they come across any evidence that the Government was not cooperating with them in the JPC, they could have walked away. I could have understood that; I would have been at fault. But they did not even give it a trial. That is my accusation against you.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The JPC has been a cover-up operation. It has been proved by 'The Hindu' disclosure that the JPC was a cover-up operation.

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: (West Bengal): Sir, I am on a point of order. We have understood his observation as to why his party did not join the JPC. I know, Mr. Dipen Ghosh is a very responsible Member and he has very good influence in his own party. I would request, through him, the State Government of West Bengal, to constitute a Joint Legislative Committee to probe into the Bengal Lamps scandal..

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: It must not go on record . . *(Interruptions)*....

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: Let him request his Chief Minister to constitute a Joint Legislative Committee in West Bengal to probe into the Bengal Lamps scandal and the Tram Company scandal ...*(Interruptions)*. . .

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, under the garb of a point of order he cannot raise any question that relates to a State Legislative Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I say, it is not a point of order at all. ...*(Interruptions)*... Expunction is a different process. I will see the record. .. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: That means we do not have even the right to call them corrupt ...*(Interruptions)*... They are, actually, trying to prove us corrupt. And we have no right even to call them corrupt. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: I have not come here at our party's mercy. Come to West Bengal ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I do not want to get into this domestic controversy but, when Shri Dipen Ghosh says that he did not come here at our mercy, he is correct. Then, does he ever reflect that the Prime Minister of this country represents 80 crores of people of this country?

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: When you are saying that Mr. V. P. Singh has made frivolous and unfounded charges, it is for the Prime Minister to prove his innocence, beyond doubt, to the nation. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Sir, he is propounding a new theory. The person who has made the charge has to prove it.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I have attempted to establish that unfounded charges have been made against the Prime Minister. I have gone into the details. I have shown on the floor of the House that these are unfounded charges. Doesn't Shri Dipen Ghosh have the honesty to stand up and say that these are unfounded charges? Does he not have that honesty?

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : I say that until and unless you ask Bofors to pay back the money, it will be proved that you are not interested to get at the truth.

SHRI K. C. PANT: You can say what you like, but, on the question of Mr. V. P. Singh's unfounded charges I expect you ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Then the truth will come out. I put this question across the Table, to you: If you have the courage, you ask Bofors to pay back the money. Only in that case will Bofors speak out and then only the truth will come out...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री मिर्जा इर्शाद बेग : ... प्रूव की जिए न। ... **(व्यवधान)**

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I have taken enough time of the House... ...

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE (West Bengal): The Minister has stated that the CBI investigation is continuing. How can he say... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: Sir, ther is a charge that they are being badly persecuted by the CPI (M) in West Bengal.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I have taken enough time of the House. I would only ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: They have no forum to speak in Bengal.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I would only like to touch on a couple of points and then end. One is about the CBI inquiries. They are continuing.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: How long, Sir? The CBI completed the inquiry regarding the three agencies. I would like to remind the honourable Minister...

SHRI K. C. PANT: You speak... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is only giving you information.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, the CBI completed the inquiry within two months regarding the nature and functions of the three agencies. But regarding the veracity of the documents, it has taken more than six months. Why is there abnormal delay? When will it will be over? That is what I want to know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him answer.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, when it is over, I will get the report.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: It will satisfy your Members, not the nation.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Yes. Then I will come to you, and through you the nation will also know.

Sir, the CBI officer has been to Sweden. He has been to Switzerland. He has been to London. He has made enquiries, and those enquiries are continuing.

There is one only point raised by one hon. Member, whether this was official. He is not here now, I find. So, this I would like to clarify that the visit was official and that the appointments were arranged through the Indian Embassy, and they commenced discussions in the Swedish Ministry of Justice.

About an agreement with the Swiss Government, you know that certain amendments had to be passed, and those have been passed by this House and the other House. The President has approved of that amendment. In the mean-time, we have to exchange some letters with the Swiss Government. The Swiss Federal Council was on a long summer recess till the third week of August. Therefore, this matter could not progress. But now on the 4th of November our Ambasador in Berne held discussions with the Swiss foreign office and was advised that action was being initiated to procure the Federal Council's approval and that the Ministry of External Affairs was vigorously pursuing the matter.

These are the important points that have been raised here, and I do not want to take more time of this House.

But I would only like to say at the end that it is a matter of profound regret to me that wholly baseless allegaions have been made, have been heard in public meetings, have been aired publicly and that this slander brings down the tone of public life in the country, it does enormous damage. (*Interruptions*)

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Don't shout.

SHRI K. C. PANT: You have the monopoly to shout. (*Interruptions*)

Sir, I know that many friends opposite would like this pot to be kept boiling. I know that they hope that this will be dragged on to the next election. I know that in every session you have not only wanted to throw us out, but you have tried to throw us out for years. That is not only your right, but it is your

[Shri K. C. Pant]

duty as the Opposition Members. That you have repeatedly failed and yet this has not discouraged you is to your credit. I entirely give you credit for this.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Bofors will remain an issue till it is cleared.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Now it is Mr. V. P. Singh who has to clear himself of how he has made these charges which are unsubstantiated. Today, Sir, the big advantage of this debate has been that Mr. V. P. Singh, after making specific charges, naming the Prime Minister, naming the account number, naming the amount of money has backed out, has refused to substantiate this. There can be no greater proof, there can be no bigger admission of the baselessness of these charges. Therefore, Sir, this has ultimately yielded something. If this has yielded only this, then, I think, it is a step forward. This would strengthen democracy in this country.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Mr. Chairman, I have got two points to be answered by the Minister. I raised those points in my speech which he has not attended to.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Some explanation, Sir.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Will the Minister kindly listen to me and reply? Mr. Chairman, you told me that he had to construct his speech and that, therefore, he was speaking on certain points.

श्री सभापति : आप कुछ कहना चाहेंगे ।

SHRI K. C. PANT: No.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: I want to ask only two points which he has not covered. Why are you fighting shy of giving reply? I raised those two points. One was in whose names do the accounts stand? Second, when are you going to ask Bofors to pay back that money?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Najma Heptulla.

श्री वीरेन्द्र वर्मा : माननीय, आपने खुद कहा था, (व्यवधान) आप हमारे हितों के रक्षक है, आप हमारे हितों की रक्षा कीजिए ।

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Welcoming the Formation of the State of Palestine

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA: (Maharashtra): I thank you for the opportunity given to me to congratulate Mr. Yasser Arafat and the people of Palestine. *(Interruptions)*.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह (बिहार): सरकार बिना जवाब के चली गई और गलत बयानी करके चली गई । हाउस को मिसलीड किया (व्यवधान)

इस सरकार को इस्तीफा देना चाहिए (व्यवधान)

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): It is not only V. P. Singh, he also wants to flight shy...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA: Mr. Dipen Ghosh, I believe you are supporter of the oppressed. Please sit down and listen to me.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Jagesh Desai) in the Chair]

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Please sit down. It is a very important special mention.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA: I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to congratulate Chairman Yasser Arafat and the people of Palestine for the formation of the State of Palestine. It is so symbolic that the State of Palestine is formed when we are celebrating the centenary of our great leader, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the great supporter of the oppressed people of the world. Shrimati Indira Gandhi,